Email: w3bmd@qsl.net
Website: www.qsl.net/w3bmd
Emergency Simplex: 147.570 MHz
Facebook: Indiana County Amateur Radio Club
REPEATERS: 146.910- PL: 131.8
444.975+ PL: 131.8/DMR CC1 TS2
TG 313037(Local), also TG 3142, 31422

ICARC NEWSLETTER

July 31 2025

Thanks go to the ARRL Foundation for it's support of ICARC's future tower and repeater upgrades at it's remote site

Officers for 2025:
President – Craig Bigler, AB3XA
Vice President - Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK
Secretary - Larry Freeman, N3LT

Additional Board Members for 2025
1. Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF
2. Stuart Younkin-WB3FBL
3. Phil Kopczyk -K3PJ
4. Robert Zugates-KB3JOF
5. Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG

LOCAL HAPPENINGS:

Activities at the remote site on Rhine Rd remote site

July 30, 2025

Several of us worked at cutting and bending steel rebar for the cages to go in the anchor holes; Dave Steiner fabricated a bending jig that made the job go much easier than it could have. There were five of us at the site working on the project (David Steiner-W3CDH), Kosalko-N3ARA, Deryl Mack-KC3YZW. Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG, Larry Freeman-N3LT. A few photos follow to give you a sense of the required effort.

As is evident, much effort was put into this day we worked until around noon. One cage was partially completed. We also prepared the remaining steel for the next cages. We learned a lot about what not to do. At the next work session we expect things to do even better.

July 26, "Last Saturday" Event

The goal was to have hams who have never constructed a wire dipole antenna from scratch, in the field or anywhere else, to actually to it. Credit for the original idea goes to Fred Maize-KM3M, who passed it to Craig Bigler-AB3XA, who passed it to Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO who took it and ran with it by organizing and leading this event. For practical reasons, the allowed bands were restricted 20, 15, and 10 meters due to limited space available for erecting and using multiple antennas, simultaneously. The individuals brought their own rigs, tuners, power supply or battery. I'm very happy to say that it was a great success and much fun. Basically, the individuals were given wire, coax and appropriate connectors and insulators. Band choice was first come first serve. Ralph Timblin chose 20 m, Bill Robinson was on 15 m and Ian Bigler was on 10 m. There were other folks there to help get the antennas into the air. The event officially started at 11:00 AM and went into the late afternoon. We suffered no drenching due to the predicted rain, which occurred later in the evening.

The participants were, Ralph timblin-N3UDI, Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF, Ian Bigler-KC3DTE, Cass Fitzgerald, Mike Kosalko-N3ARA, David Steiner-W3CDH, Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG, Deryl Mack-KC3YZW, Larry Freeman-N3LT. Every antenna checked out well and contacts were made with Ralph leading leading the pack, and Bill coming in second. Unfortunately, 10 m was close to being dead so Ian got the “short straw”. All-in-All it was a nice event. See the photos that follow Courtesy of Ca Fitzgerald and Larry Freeman.

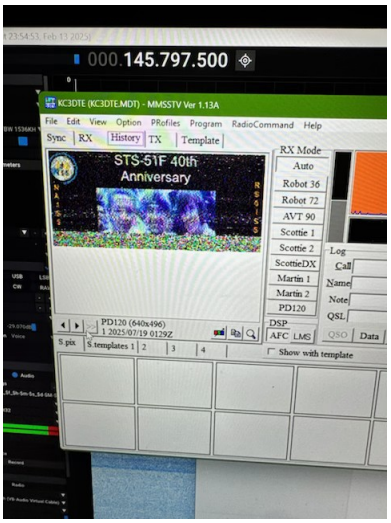
July 19, Clean up and Hole digging for the new tower anchors:

A Buzz of activity occurred culminating in the digging of 3 holes at the site in preparation for stabilizing the new tower with permanent guy lines. The work started on the site July 2 continuing through July 4, 5, & 6 ending with locating and marking the anchor positions. The initial work started on July 2 removing the old guy wires from the downed tower, taking the old tower apart, moving and organizing the sections "out of the way". Then after some bad weather and recuperation time; on July 19 work was done to clean out trees and brush in the "jungle" behind the repeater building to clear a path for the back hoe and eventually the cement truck. Once the cleaning had been done, the digging started and after a very long day there were three holes dug with one, unfortunately, containing a large boulder protruding into it. That is the next challenge.

The following people were present and active at various times for the work throughout this period: Craig Bigler, Ian Bigler, Cass Fitzgerald, Dave Steiner, Mike Kosalko, Bill McMillen, Phil Kopczyk, Elmer Sorisio, Deryl Mack and Larry Freeman. The work at times was laborious in hot and humid weather. Many thanks are owed to those who have participated in this effort. A few photos follow to provide some reference for the level of activity.

There was other activity unrelated to the Rhine Rd. site by several who decided to decipher some slow scan images from the ISS during this week and weekend to celebrate the Apollo-Soyuz mission, and the 40th anniversary of Challenger mission STS-51f. I received the following images from Ian Bigler and Cass Fitzgerald: (The transmission was on 146.900 MHz)

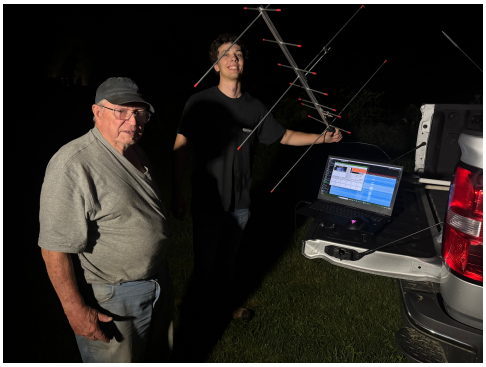
Ian's Image



Ass's Image

YQ | PD120 | 2025/07/18 2209 | to N3FLO

N3LT was able to travel to Ian's home and see the setup he used out off the tailgate of his truck All you need to is a radio, good audio coupling, and the free software, MMSSTV on your computer to get it done.



Also On July 2, 2025 there was a group of us at the Rhine Rd. site clearing the downed tower of coax, guy wires, antennas and other structures in preparation for getting it separated into its sections and moved off to the side in order to clear the ground for installing new anchors so the new tower can be stabilized with new guy wires. This work carried over through July 4, 5, and 6 until the tower had been stripped and separated into its sections and new locations for the anchor hole sites were determined. Many people participated in these activities.: Dave Steiner, Cass Fitzgerald, Craig Bigler, Mike Kosalko, Bill McMillen, Elmer Sorisio, Ian Bigler, Deryl Mack, Larry Freeman.

At least one witness on July 4 found the activity fascinating:

Announcements:
Remember the ICARC meeting on Aug 5, 2025, 6:30 pm at the Indiana, PA Eat 'n Park Restaurant.

The Sixth formal meeting of the ICARC Grant Committee was held on Tue, June 17, 2025. Another meeting has yet to be scheduled.

For future reference: Anyone providing photographs to the newsletter editor to be published should submit them in .PNG or .JPG format. Do NOT use the HEIC format introduced by Apple for its iphones. Super high resolution is not needed for the newsletter. None of my current, outdated, computer applications support the HEIC format.

As you know the old tower is down and we are in the process to installing the new tower. The video links for the tower take down are given below:

Links for Tower Take-down

Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0

https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY

https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk

The secondary repeater coverage is degraded due to the tower removal activity It will be reestablished as soon as possible.

Another Interesting Mode of Operation on the Rise:
There is a newer, digital weak signal mode of operation that that seems to be catching on:VARAC
It is a interesting mode in that unlike FT-8 and other modes it can ALMOST be conversational in that you can communicate keyboard-keyboard by typing your message and sending it as soon as you are done typing. There is no timed structure to the sequence. I suspect that many of you who do a good bit of FT-8 and FT-4 may be familiar with this. In any case take a look at the home page, you may find it interesting too. I've downloaded it but not yet tried it. Explore the home page at: https://www.varac-hamradio.com/

Reminder: The ICARC Public Service and Information Net happens on each Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.91/146.31 Mhz. (ICARC is an ARRL affliated club).

Reminder: The ICARC meetings are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month; next meeting is Tue, August 5 2025, located at the Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant in the backroom at 6:30 PM. Hope to see you there. Also, in the same room, there is usually an informal breakfast each Saturday morning starting around 08:30 am.

Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, and Bill Robinson. We thank you fellows very much. We can always use more.

Attention Technician and General licensees (and prospective hams), have you thought about upgrading? Do you have trouble making it to an in-person ham exam? Now you don't have that excuse. Groups holding online ham exams have greatly expanded. Some groups are having exams daily. Reportedly it is an easy process if you have a laptop, desktop or tablet with a camera and microphone. Below are websites where you can look into testing online.

https://wm7x.net/ One of the most popular. They have videos explaining how it's done.
https://kl7aa.org/vec/remote-testing/
https://hamstudy.org/sessions/remote Lists remote and in person test sessions.

From the ARRL Members Only Bulletin:

ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® filed comments [PDF] with the Federal Communications Commission in response to its request for public input on alleviating unnecessary regulatory burdens by deleting or modifying rules, *In the Matter of Delete, Delete, Delete*. Implementing ARRL's suggestions would promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and enhance the development of the next generation of radio amateurs.

In response to ARRL's request, over 200 members submitted suggestions that were reviewed when considering what rules should be deleted or modified. ARRL will continue to engage with members and advocate for the Amateur Radio Service.

In its filing, ARRL asked the FCC to delete or amend the following rules:

Delete the LF and VHF/UHF Symbol (Baud) Rate and Bandwidth Limitations

ARRL supports the deletion of these restrictions as proposed by the Commission in late 2023. Doing so would enhance Amateur experimentation with digital technologies.

Update and Modernize Entry Level Technician Class License Privileges

ARRL reiterated its earlier proposal for extending additional limited privileges for Technician class operators. Adopting its proposal would provide new licensees an introductory window to HF data and phone communications that are at the core of the Amateur Radio experience and serve to incentivize the next generation of technical leaders just as Novice CW HF privileges did for earlier generations of operators.

Modernize 80/75 Meter Sub band Divisions

ARRL requested action on an earlier proposal that would make more efficient and intense use of the 80/75 meter band. Changes in technology and modes since band usage was last addressed have resulted in overcrowding in one band segment that would be alleviated by adoption of ARRL's proposal.

Delete and Replace Obsolete Digital Code Limitations

ARRL also asked the FCC remove provisions that refer to digital codes that today are obsolete and permit Radio Amateurs to experiment freely with new digital codes, so long as such codes are publicly documented and decodable over the air.

Implement Changes to Third Party Rules Adopted Internationally at WRC-03

Although the United States fully supported changes to the ITU Radio Regulations in 2003 that removed a treaty requirement for third-party messages, there is no record of this change having been considered and the FCC's rules were never conformed to the new provision. Being the only nation known to continue to require a formal treaty for such purposes has resulted in no new such treaties for since the treaty changed more than two decades ago. Thus ARRL asked the FCC to Implement rules that are consistent with those internationally agreed to align with the rest of the world.

Delete Amplifier Drive Limitation

ARRL requested that the Commission act favorably on a pending proposal to remove limits HF amplifier gain that add to Amateur equipment cost and impede use of new efficient amplifier technology.

Remove Non-current Personal Information in Amateur ULS records

ARRL requested that the FCC complete a rule making in which it proposed that only current licensee

information to be visible in the public (ULS) database. Right now, if an amateur changes their address to a Post Office Box to shield their home address, the previous address remains visible. ARRL advocates for protecting the privacy of radio amateurs.

Delete Obsolete Identification Requirement for Special Call Signs

Users of special event call signs are required to identify with the FCC-issued responsible call sign at least once each hour. This can be confusing, especially on data and CW modes. ARRL proposed reliance on the web-based database that clearly identifies each special event call sign and authorized period of use.

Delete Obsolete Paper License Replacement Provision

The FCC no longer mails physical copies of amateur radio licenses, so ARRL suggested deleting the rule that provides for sending paper replacements as obsolete.

The FCC notice [PDF] generated a lot of interest among radio amateurs, with hundreds of Amateurs submitting comments directly to the FCC as well as responding to ARRL's request for suggestions.

The FCC deadline for filing reply comments is April 28, 2025.

It is hoped that the Commission will incorporate worthy suggestions in a future Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) later this year. At that time there will be a new opportunity for public comment on the specific rules that the Commission proposes to delete or modify.

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act Re-Introduced
Legislation Will Increase Communication Options During Natural Disasters
WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Richard Blumenthal, D- Conn., and Representatives August Pfluger, R-Tex., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn. announced their joint re-introduction of legislation in the Senate and House to restore the right to Amateur Radio operators to install the antennas necessary to serve their communities. Homeowner association rules often prevent Amateur Radio operators from installing antennas at their homes even though Amateur Radio has proven to be essential in emergencies and natural disasters such as hurricanes when other means of communication fail.
"Mississippians should have access to every possible means of warning for natural disasters, including amateur radio operators. In an emergency, those warnings can mean the difference between life and death," Senator Wicker said. "The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act would remove unnecessary roadblocks that could help keep communities safe during emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and fires."
"When disaster strikes, amateur radio operators provide vital, often life-saving information, which shouldn't be hindered by prohibitive rules or confusing approval processes. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act eliminates obstacles for ham radio enthusiasts, allowing them to continue their communications and serve their communities in the face of emergencies," said Senator Blumenthal.
"Natural disasters and other emergency situations that hinder our regular lines of communication are unfortunately unavoidable, which is why we must bolster our emergency preparedness by removing the barriers amateur radio operators often run into when installing antennas. Amateur radio plays a vital role in public safety by delivering critical information to people at all times. My district is home to dozens of amateur radio operators ready to volunteer in the event of an emergency, and I am proud to lead this legislation," said Congressman August Pfluger.

“As we know from recent natural disasters, amateur radio operators in Connecticut can be a critical component of disaster response and emergency management. It is in our communities’ best interest that we give them the capabilities to operate at the highest level, and with the re-introduction of this bill, we’ve taken a strong step in that direction,” said Congressman Court.

Background:

The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S. 459) would require homeowner associations to accommodate the needs of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators by prohibiting the enforcement of private land use restrictions that ban, prevent, or require the approval of the installation or use of Amateur Radio station antennas. Homeowner associations have often prevented installation and use of such antennas through private land use restrictions. This has hindered voluntary training for emergency situations and blocked access to necessary communications when disaster strikes.

Among other provisions, this legislation would:

Prohibit homeowner association rules that would prevent or ban Amateur Radio antennas;

Specify an approval process for installing Amateur Radio antennas;

Provide a Federal private right of action to Amateur Radio operators in disputed cases.

On behalf of America’s Amateur Radio licensees, Rick Roderick, the President of The American Radio Relay League, re-confirmed the ARRL’s full support for the passage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 and extended his thanks and appreciation to Senators Wicker and Blumenthal and Congressmen Pfluger and Courtney for their unflagging leadership of the bi-partisan effort to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

The text of the House version can be found at this link: https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Advocacy/HR1094 House Private Land Use Bill.pdf?_zs=ab8xl&_zl=9xlE3

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Other Announcements of potential interest:

From the ARRL WEB Site: Grants to Amateur Radio Organizations: The ARRL Foundation grants program awards limited funding to organizations for eligible amateur radio related projects and initiatives, particularly those with a focus on educating, licensing, and supporting Amateur Radio activities. Youth-based projects and initiatives are especially encouraged. The ARRL Foundation grants program accepts proposals on a cyclical model three times a year.

2025 Grant proposals are accepted from:

- February 1 - February 28
- June 1 - June 30
- October 1 - October 31

Attention: If other ICARC members would like to contribute to this Newsletter, please contact or submit articles to the Newsletter editor, N3LT via email at n3lt@arrl.net or wd4hoz@gmail.com by the middle of each month. Preferred document format is ".**doc"**, for editing purposes. **All submissions are subject to the approval of the editor.**

Indiana County Amateur Radio Club
Membership Application

CURRENT DATE (M/D/Y): / / Membership Status(I,A,S,F): New_____ Ongoing_____

Individual Membership (I) — $35.00 **Associate/Student Membership (A, S) —** $20.00
Family Membership (F) – $50.00 {Two voting members per family}

***** Please complete the applicable information below: *****

Name:_____ DOB:_____ (Year Optional)

Call: _____ Class:_____ARRL:____FISTS:____ARES:___RACES:___

Other:_____ DOB:_____ (Year Optional)

Call:_____ Class:_____ ARRL:___FISTS:____ARES:____RACES:___

Other:_____ DOB:_____ (Year Optional)

Call:_____ Class:_____ARRL:___FISTS:____ARES:____RACES:___

Address: _____City:_____ St:_____Zip:_____

Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

Email: _____Other Email: _____

Do you belong to A.R.E.S. / R.A.C.E.S. of another County, if so which one: _____

Is it OK to put your name onto the R.A.C.E.S / A.R.E.S. emergency call list? Yes___ No___

Are you a member of the ARRL? Yes_____ No_____

Signature_____ Date _____

Please return this form along with a check or money order payable to ICARC, to:

Indiana County Amateur Radio Club
Attn: Treasurer
PO Box 2020
Indiana, PA 15701

Date Received _____ Amount $_____ (Cash) (Check) (MO) Number _____

The club info & newsletter is available on our web site at: www.qsl.net/w3bmd